

Integration

by Patch Blakey

Integration is often understood to mean the act of combining a broad array of things into a single whole. But this definition almost seems to imply that the separate, disparate parts are integral units themselves that are being actively synthesized into a new, yet unnatural, unit. Such may be the case in folding together the ingredients for chocolate chip cookies. This is not to suggest that chocolate chip cookies are unnatural, but that the ingredients are not naturally found mixed together apart from external intervention by the baker. However, this is not the direction I intend to pursue. Instead, I hope to show that there is a created order where all things are integrated by design from inception.

When we consider the nature of the Trinity, the Godhead, we find that the great Three-in-One is a fully integrated entity, comprised of three individual, but fully equal persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Father honors the Son and the Spirit, the Son honors the Father and the Spirit, and the Spirit honors the Father and the Son. They each have unique roles, but they all work together. The Father decrees, the Son speaks, and the Spirit acts.

Jesus Christ, the Son, is also an example of integration in that he is a man in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells. He is both wholly man and wholly God. His very purpose was to purchase and recreate a broken mankind to reintegrate it with its creator. One of Jesus' apostles, John, wrote, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship

with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ (1 John 1:3).

All that exists was created by God out of nothing. The result is that all of creation is integrated through its Creator. Indeed, the Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Colossian saints, said of Jesus Christ, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or powers: all things were created by him and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist" (Colossians 1:16—17). Just as an artist creates a painting that incorporates many colors, lines, perspectives and forms, yet it is still one painting; even so Jesus Christ has created all that exists as an awesome piece of cosmological art.

While the creation is separate from its Creator, it is nonetheless all His singular creation. And as a consequence, it all points back to Him; His handiwork is evident in what He has made. And this is just what Paul wrote to the church at Rome arguing, "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Romans 1:19—20).

Now, given that all of creation is from a single Creator, it should come as no surprise that all knowledge is consequently integrated in Him as well. Again

in his epistle to the Colossians, Paul spoke of Jesus Christ as the one "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3). All knowledge ultimately derives from the one who created it in the first place. All of knowledge therefore points back to Jesus Christ as its source. This is therefore what I mean by integration; it all ties together because it has a single unifying point of integration, the mind of Christ.

This issue of *Classis* is just a small start in exploring such integration. We are very thankful for those authors who have contributed to this issue in broaching this subject, and commend their articles to your reading and benefit. Yet at the same time, we are painfully aware that this singular publication of *Classis* leaves much yet to be said. What of the integration of math and rhetoric, or literature and science, or logic and art? How is logic integrated across the dialectic stage? How is Latin integrated across the Trivium?

These articles and many more have yet to be written and published, and we pray that they will be addressed soon in print, even if only as seminal thoughts to be discussed and expanded upon by others. ACCS hopes that there are many within the Association who will take up the challenge and contribute further to the development of this valuable discussion.

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